Hands On®
The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association
January/February 2005

INSIDE
Special Coverage
of the 2004 National Convention!
See pages 3-8.

## Nashville Convention Breaks Attendance Record

By all accounts, AMTA's 2004 National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, was a huge success. Attendance was at an all-time high. An estimated 1,025 convention-goers converged on Music City USA, from October 6 to 9, setting a new attendance record. They enjoyed first-class continuing education courses, several special events and a chance to mingle with their peers.

It was also a record-breaking year for the Exhibit Marketplace, with 142 booths sold—the most ever for an AMTA convention.

The convention, called "Harmonize Our Body's Song," kicked off with the annual business meeting and awards ceremony, held in the historic Ryman Auditorium, home of the Grand Ole Opry until 1974. (See photo above.)

"This year, as president, I have seen many positive changes take place, including having the largest convention to date," says AMTA President Laurel J. Freeman (FL). "Going to conventions each year energizes me as I am surrounded by like-minded people."

Keynote speaker Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D., received a standing ovation as she spoke of her personal 50-year battle with Crohn's disease, offering a unique perspective on compassion from both a patient and physician's point of view. She enhanced her speech with live performances by singer/songwriter Christie McCarthy.

*continued on page 12*

# Consumers Say Location Is Key Factor For Massage

Location is the key factor contributing to how consumers chose their last massage, according to AMTA's 2004 Annual Consumer Survey. Those surveyed said it was a more important factor than receiving a gift certificate for one.

Of the 1,009 adults surveyed, 69 percent said the location—either accessibility or type—was how they chose their last massage therapist. Meanwhile, 47 percent said a gift certificate, discount offer or insurance was the deciding factor for their choice. (The margin of error for the survey is plus or minus 3 percent.)

This year, most respondents listed spas as the preferred place to receive massage (21 percent vs. 19 percent last year), followed by 17 percent who preferred to visit a massage therapist's office, up one percentage point from last year.

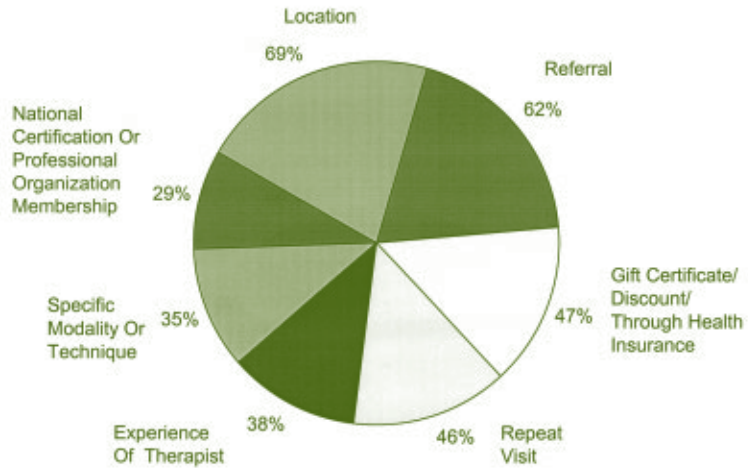
A large majority of those surveyed (80 percent) who had a massage in the last five years also said they would go back to the same therapist for another massage appointment. Nearly half of those who said they would not go back to the same therapist cited location as the reason. Eleven percent of those who said they wouldn't go back to the same therapist said they didn't like the massage they received; 9 percent didn't like the personality, behavior or approach of the massage therapist.

In another part of the survey, consumers revealed they clearly recongize AMTA over other organizations. Respondents were asked if they had heard of several massage therapy organizations.

While the response shows a low level of overall understanding of the massage therapy profession, it does show a significant recognition of AMTA above mere guessing, as twice as many respondents know AMTA (13 percent) as know any of the other choices.

If you'd like to read more about AMTA's 2004 Consumer Survey, check out the fact sheet at www.amtamassage.org/news/04consurvey.html.

### Factors Contributing To Massage Choice




*AMTA's 2004 Annual Consumer Survey revealed that location and referral are the two biggest keys for consumers seeking a massage therapist.*

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# President's Letter

## Solutions To Transitions And Challenges

As this is my last *Hands On* column, I want to thank you for your confidence. It has truly been a pleasure serving as your president. As massage therapists associated with AMTA, you have shaped the massage profession into what it is today. We are fortunate to have members participating as dedicated volunteers and a great staff that is passionate about the massage profession. AMTA's programs, products and services continue to grow. Here are some of the activities and accomplishments, achieved through excellent teamwork over the last two decades:

- In 1982, the Council of Schools was created so that school owners have a voice in shaping the massage profession. AMTA is currently investing approximately $125,000 annually.
- In 1989, COMTA was established by AMTA leaders to bring educational standards to the field of massage. Although COMTA is now independent, AMTA invested more than $1.9 million in this program.
- In 1990, the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) was created to foster the concept of having a national test to ensure massage therapists have a level of competency. Although the NCBTMB is now independent, AMTA funded the start-up cost for this program, approximately $450,000.
- In 1990, the AMTA Foundation was founded. As of this date, more than $2 million has been invested. Because our members place a high value on research, AMTA continues to invest approximately $335,000 per year to the newly named Massage Therapy Foundation.
- In 1991, the Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Practice Organizations was created so that massage and bodywork and other therapeutic associations could work together for legislative efforts at the state and national levels.
- Since the Law and Legislation Assistance Program (LLAP) began awarding LLAP grants in 1992, a total of $1,485,221 in grants have been awarded to chapters.
- In 2002, AMTA published a book used for teaching in massage schools.
- AMTA's communications department continues to increase the public's knowledge and awareness of massage. The result is that more people are receiving massage.

As I reflect on the past two decades, I am impressed with AMTA's tremendous growth. As of December 1, AMTA had 51,129 members, and more than 1,000 people attended the Nashville convention. AMTA will continue to grow and prosper as long as we work together as a team, emphasize our ethics and standards, and continue to increase the public's awareness of the value of healthy touch through massage.

Love and Light,

Laurel J. Freeman

**Laurel J. Freeman**
*AMTA President*

# Exhibit Marketplace Sells Out

Foot traffic was heavy at the sold-out Exhibit Marketplace, as attendees browsed the 142 vendor booths at this year's show. The exhibit hall is always a popular destination for convention-goers, and this year was no exception. Visitors were treated to displays ranging from massage oils and lotions to jewelry and all natural skin-care products.

*Dr. Qwak Qwak was awarded the most creative new product display. Their products include eye pillows and aromatherapy sprays.*

Several exhibitors were awarded for their booth displays, including Dr. Qwak Qwak for the most creative new product display, Biotone for exhibit of the year, and Firefly All Natural Skin Care for most creative display.

"We thoroughly enjoyed talking with the massage therapists and introducing them to our product line, and in turn, our products sold extremely well," says Anne Heikkila, owner of Firefly. "We had a great time and look forward to future AMTA meetings, both regional and national."

Chances to win travel vouchers, and a Web site with hosting for a year, kept the crowd coming to AMTA's booth. On Thursday and Friday evening, drawings were held for the $500 travel vouchers. Nicole Soper of Madison, Wisconsin, took home Thursday's prize, and Cyndi Murray of Kennewick, Washington, won on Friday. Rey Capili of Wallingford, Connecticut, was the winner of the Web site and one-year hosting on Saturday.

*Firefly All Natural Skin Care products sold well at this year's convention, especially its product gift sets.*

Next year's exhibit hall looks to be even bigger. To date, 92 Booths have been pre-sold—the highest pre-sell number of booths ever.

*Several hundred people visited the Exhibit Marketplace on its opening night. The 142 vendors offered a wide variety of products, including massage tables, oils and lotions, and educational tools. Through late fall, 92 booths have been pre-sold for the 2005 convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

# Fink Marks 50 Years With AMTA

AMTA was just 11 years old, and was known as the American Association of Masseurs and Masseuses (AAMM) when Thomas Fink (PA) joined in 1954.

Fifty years later, more than a few things have changed. However, at 77, Fink is still not only a member of AMTA, but also massages between six to 10 clients a week. He joyfully received his AMTA 50-year member pin at the opening awards ceremony in Nashville, with his wife of 55 years, Marie, at his side.

"I didn't think there would be too many people I would recognize," Fink says of his latest convention experience. "But there were people attending I haven't seen in 30 years. It was refreshing to see so many faces. More people are getting involved in professional massage."

Originally, Fink received an associate degree in business, but back in 1949, jobs weren't too plentiful. He saw that the local YMCA in Allentown, Pennsylvania, was seeking to hire an attendant. The position paid $35 a week. Once he was hired, the company paid for him to attend school at the Chicago School of Swedish Massage. By 1954, he was a full-time massage therapist at the YMCA in Allentown. He's been working in the profession ever since.

According to Fink, the biggest change he has witnessed in the business is the shift from a male-dominated profession to a female one. He also notes the higher education standards in existence now, the greater number of massage students, and people choosing massage as a part-time profession, rather than a full-time one.

But working in the profession part-time never appealed to him. "It is something that I loved to do. I'm a people person," says Fink. "Sitting in an office eight to 10 hours a day was not to my liking. I like meeting different people all the time, doing something constructive to help people with their health."

Once he entered his career, he wasted no time in joining the then-AAMM. He served on the national board of directors for 28 years with two terms as president, first from1967–1969, then again from 1977–1979—the only person in AMTA's history to serve two nonsequential terms as president.

"If you are a professional, you should be affiliated with a professional association," says Fink. "I've been good to AMTA, and AMTA has been good to me. It takes good cooperation from both sides to make a relationship work."

Though retired for the most part, there are some clients who still insist on seeing him for their massages. "There are people who won't let me quit," quips Fink. "We joke that we each hope the other [dies] first."

*Fink received his 50-year member pin from AMTA President Laurel J. Freeman.*

The clients he continues to work with have been with him for 30 years. "You have to take care of the people who supported you over the years."

*—Valerie A. Danner*

## Board Addresses Key Issues At October Meeting

At its October meeting, the AMTA Board of Directors made several decisions that will help members more easily complete their continuing education hours, open up new ways to generate revenue to expand AMTA programs for members, and gain new recognition for those massage therapists who choose to work with the medical community.

- **Continuing Education Hours:** Beginning December 2004, AMTA will accept a member's national certification and recertification in lieu of reporting continuing education hours. Based on a recommendation from the House of Delegates and suggestions from members, this will make it easier for those AMTA Professional Active members who are nationally certified to meet their AMTA continuing education requirements.
- **Sponsorship Program:** AMTA will expand sponsorship opportunities for advertisers, exhibitors and consumer goods companies as a source of non-dues revenue to fund services and programs for members.
- **AMTA's Role In Massage Therapy Education:** AMTA wants the level of massage practice and success to continually improve. The board agreed that this is an area AMTA should focus on in the future.
- **Measuring AMTA's Success:** The board established measures for determining the association's overall success. These results will guide decisions about areas of focus next year and efficient use of AMTA resources to meet those measurable goals.
- **AMTA To Submit New CPT Codes To AMA:** The board accepted the recommendations of Whitney Lowe (OR), AMTA's representative on the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Advisory Panel, to propose two new massage therapy codes massage therapists legally could use to seek insurance reimbursement. (See article on page 9.)

The board would like to encourage all members to share their voices in association-related decisions. The proposed bylaws changes will streamline explanations of how the national board of directors functions, and provide flexibility in the functions and structure of the national volunteer workforce. This will include flexibility for national committees and workgroups. Go to the AMTA Web site to read the details of the proposed changes and offer your comments. Just login to the "Members Section" and scroll down to the "Voice Your Opinion" link for more information.

# 2004 National Convention

Nashville, Tennessee

## National Award Recipients 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| President's Award | *Leon Chaitow* |
| National Distinguished Service Award | *Elliot Greene (MD)* |
| National Meritorious Award | *Glenath Moyle (OR)* |
| Outstanding Committee Award | *Special committee to evaluate the membership structure* |
| Outstanding National Committee Chair | *Marietta J. Flagg (PA), House Of Delegates Operations Committee* |
| Outstanding Government Relations Activist Award | *Edwin F. Sansbury (NC)* |
| Chapter Growth Award | *Illinois Chapter* |
| Best Chapter Web Site Award | *Indiana Chapter* |
| Outstanding Newsletter Award | *Nancy Vail (FL)* |
| Outstanding Sports Massage Team | *Ohio Team* |
| Sports Massage Achiever Award | *Ernest J. Kidd (VA)* |
| Humanitarian Award | *Winifred J. Cain (AZ)* |
| Government Relations Committee Achievement Award | *North Carolina Chapter* |
| Certificate Of Appreciation | *Denise L. Logsdon (KY)* |

## Chapter Meritorious Award Recipients 2004

| Chapter | Recipient |
|---|---|
| Alabama | *Robin A. Schafer* |
| Arizona | *Patricia A. Trout* |
| California | *Anne Jackson* |
| Colorado | *Trudy B. Brown* |
| Connecticut | *Richard M. Testa* |
| Delaware | *Lisa Schad* |
| D.C. | *Kelly Bowers* |
| Florida | *Suzanne M. Wynn* |
| Georgia | *Jane Johnson* |
| Idaho | *Cindy Jicha* |
| Illinois | *Cherie Monterastelli* |
| Indiana | *Barbara A. Lis* |
| Iowa | *Jeanne S. Griebel* |
| Kansas | *Tiffany Phillips* |
| Kentucky | *Lydia Woodring Hunter* |
| Louisiana | *Becky Click-Rex* |
| Maine | *Vera A. Maheu* |
| Maryland | *Carol L. Lancaster* |
| Massachusetts | *Matthew J. Olds* |
| Michigan | *Bruce E. Froelich* |
| Mississippi | *Christie Beattie* |

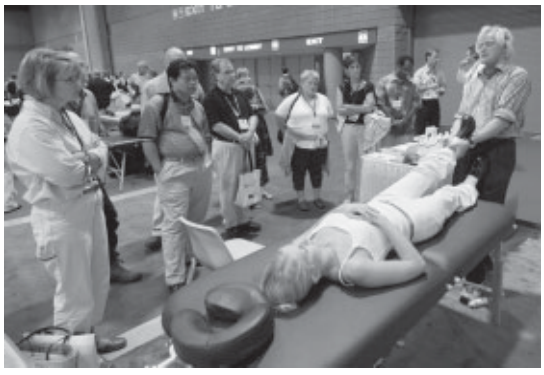
| Chapter | Recipient |
|---|---|
| Missouri | *Linda Judd* |
| Montana | *Diane Williford* |
| Nevada | *Molly A. Sher* |
| New Hampshire | *Julie M. Smith* |
| New Jersey | *Dorothea V. Atkins* |
| New Mexico | *James A. Williamson* |
| New York | *Dale Montelione Grust* |
| North Carolina | *Ed Sansbury* |
| North Dakota | *Carla J. Anderson* |
| Ohio | *Yvonne M. Fey* |
| Oregon | *Glenath Moyle* |
| Pennsylvania | *Marietta J. Flagg* |
| Rhode Island | *Carl W. Stearns* |
| South Carolina | *Ann Blair Kennedy* |
| Texas | *Susan P. Olson* |
| Utah | *Carolyn M. Rowse* |
| Vermont | *Bria Singer* |
| Virginia | *Cynthia Parsons* |
| Washington | *Ann Brittain* |
| West Virginia | *Robert Rogers* |
| Wisconsin | *Kay Peterson* |

# 2004 National Convention

## The Faces Of Convention 2004

*Among those AMTA officials addressing attendees in Nashville were (clockwise, l-r): President-Elect Mary Beth Braun; President Laurel J. Freeman; Executive Director Elizabeth Lucas; and Immediate Past President Brenda L. Griffith.*

*Top photo: Enjoying themselves at the dinner dance were (l-r): Brenda L. Griffith, Mary Beth Braun and Laurel J. Freeman. Bottom right: Keynote speaker Rachel Remen received a standing ovation after her speech at the annual business meeting. Laurel J. Freeman presented the President's Award to Leon Chaitow (bottom center), and the Distinguished Service Award to Elliot Greene (bottom left).*



## The Exhibit Hall Bustle

*Convention attendees had 142 vendor booths to browse this year, many of which had presentations. From (l-r): Attendees watch a demonstration at the Custom Craftworks exhibit; Erik Dalton demonstrates while attendees look on, and a man gets a massage at the Ashiatsu Oriental Bar Therapy. Bottom center, the Tennessee Chapter offered chair massage to rejuvenate conference attendees.*

# 2004 National Convention

Nashville, Tennessee

## Fine-Tuning Your Skills

*One of the highlights of AMTA's annual conventions is always the continuing education courses. This year's offerings were no exception. From left to right, clockwise from the upper left: Mary Capone works with her class in "Sounding The Liquid Body;" massage therapists practice newly learned skills in "10-Minute Sequence Of Russian Method Of Seated Massage;" Pete Whitridge instructs therapists in the "Business Of Massage;" participants look on in as David Kent teaches "Headaches: Types, Triggers & Treatment," and attendees participate in "Fijian Massage."*

*Photos on pages 6-7 by Victor Bruce*

MASSAGE THERAPY FOUNDATION

# Foundation Highlights From Nashville

## Inauguration Of The Foundation's 2004 Distinguished Service Award

The Massage Therapy Foundation launched its new Distinguished Service Award at this year's Annual Donors' Reception in Nashville. The Distinguished Service Award was designed to honor individuals whose service to the profession, by nature of their generous volunteer efforts on behalf of the foundation, goes far beyond the norm. This year's award recipients are a group of core leaders who founded the Massage Therapy Foundation. The 2004 awardees are: Iris Burman (FL); Grace Chan, D.O.M.P. (CN); Elliot Greene (MD); Janet Kahn, Ph.D. (VT); Robert King (IL); George Kousaleos (FL); Sue Kozisek (NE); Martha Brown Menard, Ph.D. (VA) and Raymond Moriyasu (RI).

## 2004 Grant Winners

*Research*

**Harriet W. Hopf, M.D.**, University of California, San Francisco
"Mechanisms And Clinical Outcomes Of Lymphatic-Circulatory Massage On Wound Healing"

**Christopher Moyer, M.A.**, and **James B. Rounds, Ph.D.**, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
"Massage Therapy: An Examination Of The Contextual Model"

*Community Service*

**Theresa Polley**, San Diego Cancer Research Institute
"Caring For The Caregiver"

**Edith Seyl**, Weaver's Tale Retreat Center, Inc.
"Caregiver Respite Retreats"

**Adrienne Winiecki**, Porter-Starke Counseling Centers
"Hands On"

For more information on the Massage Therapy Foundation's Granting Program, please visit www.massagetherapyfoundation.org/grants.html. Or, contact Alison Pittas, research and programming associate, at 847-905-1667.

## Massage Therapy Foundation Corporate Giving Program Grows

Also in Nashville, Massage Therapy Foundation President John J. Balletto (RI) was presented with a pledge of $10,000 from Biotone. The company joins the foundation's Corporate Giving Program as a Sustaining Benefactor. Thanks to Biotone and all of the foundation's corporate partners for their support of research, community service and educational programs. If your company would like to become a part of the foundation's Corporate Giving Program, please contact Gini Ohlson, foundation director, at 847-905-1420, or *gohlson@massagetherapyfoundation.org*.

## AMTA Chapters Step Forward Again

The Dollar-Per-Member Campaign, through which AMTA Chapters donate a "Dollar Per Member" toward the foundation's granting programs, is the backbone of the foundation's annual fundraising campaigns. This year, participating chapters have already raised $18,500! Many of the chapters have donated in excess of $1 per member. If you would like to see a list of participating chapters, please go to www.massagetherapyfoundation.org/found_benefactors.html.

## 2004 Massage Therapy Foundation Post-Convention Workshop

The 2004 Massage Therapy Foundation post-convention workshop was held October 10 to 11, following the AMTA convention. This year's workshop, presented by Leon Chaitow N.D., D.O, featured "Fibromyalgia Syndrome: Bodywork And Complementary Strategies For Its Management." More than 90 people attended, and more than $20,000 was raised for the foundation.

*Dr. Leon Chaitow presented the Massage Therapy Foundation's post-convention workshop.*

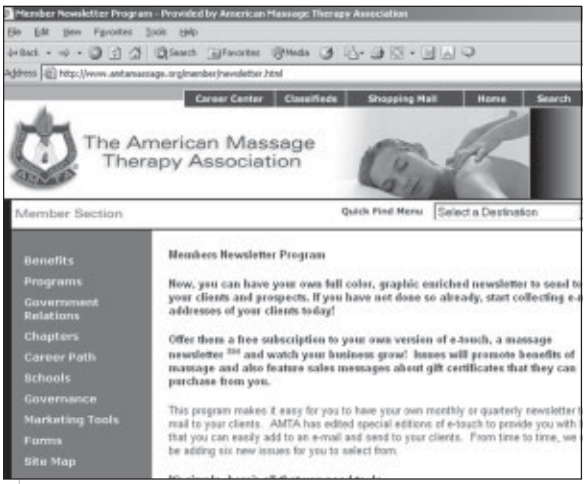
# WEB BYTES

## Use AMTA's Build Your Own Newsletter Program To Sell Gift Certificates

Sending your own e-newsletter to clients is a great way to increase your business. Now, you can personalize your own full-color, graphic-enriched version of AMTA's *e-touch* to E-mail your clients.

To find articles to use, just login to the "Members Section" at www.amtamassage.org, and scroll down to the "Member Newsletter Program." There, you will find a number of articles that promote the value of massage to your clients. And, just in time for Valentine's Day, there are articles available that promote gift certificates for your clients. (If you are running low on gift certificates, just stop by the "AMTA Shopping Mall," where they are an additional 10 percent off.)

Periodic communication with your clients is a great way to remind them to regularly have massages. So if you have not done so already, start collecting E-mail addresses of your clients and take advantage of the "Member Newsletter Program" today!




*Taking advantage of the "Member Newsletter Program" is an easy way to regularly keep in touch with clients.*

## AMTA Requests New Insurance Codes From The American Medical Association

At its October 2004 meeting, the AMTA Board of Directors agreed to submit to the American Medical Association (AMA) a request for two new insurance codes for massage therapy to be added to the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code book. The proposal for additional codes (an evaluation code and a reevaluation code for a massage therapy session) will be heard by the AMA's CPT panel in February 2005.

The request for the additional codes is a follow-up to the AMA's 2003 offer to AMTA to be a part of the Health Care Professionals Advisory Committee (HCPAC) in order to represent the massage therapy profession when considering the implementation of new codes or revision of existing codes. AMTA selected Whitney Lowe (OR) as the representative to the HCPAC.

Massage therapists interested in third party reimbursement can read a more detailed article at www.amtamassage.org/news/12104codesarticle.html, and review the code change request form on the AMTA Web site at: www.amtamassage.org/pdf/Code_change_request_form_9_04.pdf

## STRONG MEDIA RELATIONS HIGHLIGHT NMTAW

AMTA's media relations for the 2004 National Massage Therapy Awareness Week® (NMTAW) produced terrific results. Information from AMTA's 2004 Consumer Survey attracted attention from local TV stations, weekly medical/health-care publications, Internet and E-mail health-care journals, and local newspapers.

*Fred Engel (MO) took part in NMTAW by offering massage at a Curves gym and another workout center.*

For the first time, AMTA worked with its public relations firm to promote a live TV interview via satellite with an AMTA spokesperson. TV stations throughout the country were offered a time slot to interview Immediate Past President Brenda L. Griffith (VA), who was in a Chicago studio. Some 350 TV stations received the broadcast and were able to use video from it to produce stories about massage. Ten stations participated in interviews on October 28, while the recording of the interviews was sent a second time the following week to the same 350 TV stations.

Information from the consumer survey was published in 10 health-care weekly publications—including *Cancer Weekly, Health & Medicine Week and Women's Health Weekly*—highlighting how consumers reported very positive conversations with their health-care providers about use of massage therapy, especially for relief from—and management of—pain.

Several health-care newsletters distributed AMTA's press release for NMTAW, and included links to AMTA's Web site and a recommendation to look for an AMTA massage therapist through *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist*® national locator service.

*Rennet Gruver (IA) and Ashley Feuss (IA) use chair massage to help a naval reservist in Iowa.*

Throughout the United States, consumers and potential clients also benefited from events organized by AMTA chapters and members. Tens of millions of Americans learned more this past October about the benefits of massage therapy and how to find a qualified AMTA member massage therapist.

# fingerprints

## AMTA Addresses Medical Massage Questions

AMTA has received many questions from members and nonmember massage therapists about whether or not a special medical massage certification would be necessary, beginning in 2005, for massage therapists to receive insurance reimbursement for massage therapy. AMTA has no information indicating that any state legislature or regulatory body has made any form of medical massage certification a requirement to seek reimbursement from insurance companies.

CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) codes are used by insurance companies to determine reimbursement for providers and/or patients for treatment and services provided by health-care providers. (See the article on page 9 about AMTA's recommendations to the American Medical Association for new codes applicable to massage therapists.)

AMTA recognizes that many members are interested in these issues and is committed to continuing to educate members about insurance reimbursement for massage and how to be accepted as health-care providers.

## *Hands On* Needs You!

Have you recently won an award in recognition for your massage therapy work? Are you spreading the word about massage in your community? Have you achieved an extraordinary feat that you'd like to share with other members? *Hands On* is looking for contributions for its "Fingerprints" section in each issue of the newsletter. Send a brief description or press release ***and a photo*** that can accompany the story to:

Valerie A. Danner
*Hands On* Managing Editor
American Massage Therapy Association
500 Davis St., Suite 900
Evanston, IL 60201

Or, if you have a digital photo and prefer to send your entry via E-mail, send it to: *vdanner@amtamassage.org*. Please make sure that the digital photo is taken in *high resolution.*

## Breast Cancer Walk Raises Awareness Of Massage Therapy

On October 24, Karen A. Pirhalla (CT) donated free pre- and post-walk table massages to participants in the Fairfield Connecticut Walk For Hope. The walk raised $10,000 for the Norma F. Pfriem Breast Care Center and also promoted massage therapy for walkers, those in treatment and survivors.

Pirhalla volunteers at the Breast Care Center in Fairfield, Connecticut, every week, giving table massage to both patients and staff. The executive director of the center asked her to provide massage at the walk, and she happily obliged. Wendy Musarella (CT) also donated her time to give massage to participants.

*Volunteers massage some of the participants at a charity event for breast cancer.*

"[Volunteering] has been quite rewarding," Pirhalla says. "It is a good feeling to see a smile on a person's face when you are done, as well as the 'enlightenment' a person experiences from the massage. I have found a good number of people who have never had a massage."

In addition to working the breast cancer walk for the center, Pirhalla also offers chair and table massage at reduced rates to patients, families and friends of the center.

Pirhalla says volunteering has brought in more clients and increased exposure for her business. "After receiving [massage] they want to know more about me and where I am located. Volunteering is another way of reaching out to the public, bringing forth awareness of the value of massage and a good chance of gaining clientele," she says. "In this business, the sky's the limit

when it comes to touching the lives of people and the difference you can make."

## Volunteers Offer Massage At Muscular Dystrophy Camp

At one special summer camp, kids with muscular dystrophy come together every summer for a week of fun, bonding and good times with other kids afflicted with neuromuscular diseases.

Since 1997, Marie Pichaske (MD) has provided massage at Camp Maria in Leonardtown, Maryland , after she saw how hard the counselors worked to give her son, Petey Renzi—who has duchenne muscular dystrophy—a wonderful camp experience.

"When he started going to camp, he was running around like any other kid might," Pichaske says of her now 22-year-old son. "Over the years that changed with a progression of leg braces, wheelchairs, and, now breathing aids. It's a hard, ever-progressing disease for kids and their families."

The camp was created by the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) for people 6 to 21 afflicted with any of the 40-plus neuromuscular diseases covered by MDA. Counselors from all over the United States volunteer their time at the camp, where they are someone else's hands and arms—they bathe and dress the children who can't do such things for themselves. Pichaske volunteers her time to massage the counselors and the kids attending.

Several years ago, she recruited more massage therapists to help with the two, one-week camp sessions. For the first time, there were enough therapists to cover both weeks of camp last year. Deborah R. Myers (MD) was one of those volunteers.

"After spending several hours there, I truly did not want to leave," says Myers. "It meant a lot to give to the counselors who give so much to these children."

Pichaske says a few therapists have offered to spend a couple of days at the camp. She hopes that one day she will have enough volunteers to cover every day the camp runs.

"The world is full of wonder that [daily] routine blurs into the background," says Pichaske. "Camp Maria brought it sharply back into focus, with faces softened by relief and bodies—some contorted by disease—relaxed."

If you are interested in participating at a MDA camp, contact Marie Pichaske at 301-332-6560, or pichaske@comcast.net.

*Massage therapists volunteer their time every summer at a muscular dystrophy camp.*

# quick tips!

## Remodeling Your Office

It's a new year, and perhaps you are ready for a new design for your office space. While remodeling is an exciting time, it can also be a frustrating one. But with some preparation and planning, the task can run much more smoothly.

Here are some tips to keep your sanity as you start your remodeling:

- Sketch a basic model of the project and make sure it's to scale. Put in items such as furniture, lights, ceiling fans and equipment so you can see how everything fits together. Choose convenient placement for outlets and telephone jacks.
- Make a list of everything you want, including little things, such as the number of electrical outlets and skylights. Give this list to all the people who are bidding on the job.
- When you get quotes from contractors (or subcontractors), get a detailed breakdown so you are certain they are bidding on what you requested. Find out ahead of time how charges are assessed for changes. (Budget at least 30 percent more than the quote.)
- Allow substantial time for plans to be drawn and permits issued.
- Plan on the job taking twice as long as projected due to changes, unexpected delays and oversights, such as not allowing for holidays.
- Avoid remodeling if you are currently experiencing a lot of stress (a significant number of relationships end within one year after building a project).
- Develop a plan for how you will handle the logistics of running your office and/or home during remodeling.
- Only give a maximum of one-half of the fee upfront (and this is after getting the architectural plans and permits).

*Adapted from "How To Set Up A Great Home Office," by Cherie Sohnen-Moe,* Massage Therapy Journal, *Spring 2003.*

# Calendar

## 2005

### January 18-22
AMTA COS Meeting
Newport Beach, California
Contact: 847-905-1650

### March 12-13
AMTA Board Of Directors Meeting
Chicago, Illinois
Contact: 847-905-1657

### June 11-12
AMTA Board Of Directors Meeting
San Diego, California
Contact: 847-905-1657

### July 7-10
Chapter Volunteer Orientation Program
Evanston, Illinois
Contact: 847-905-1428

### September 21-24
AMTA 2005 National Convention
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Contact: 847-905-1643

# Education

## National Certification To Fulfill CE Requirement

AMTA is making it easier for renewing AMTA Professional members by allowing them to apply their status as nationally certified through the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB), in lieu of the 48 hour continuing education requirement. As of December 1, 2004, members who are nationally certified will be able to enter their certification number and expiration date on the back of their AMTA membership renewal form, or through the online continuing education submission form.

This information should be updated every four years along the same schedule as the continuing education requirement is due. Professional Active members who are not nationally certified will still need to submit 48 continuing education hours every four years.

### Start Planning For AMTA's 2005 Convention

Did you miss out on the 2004 convention? Then save the date to attend all the exciting festivities in 2005! Join your peers in Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 21–24 for a chance to network, earn continuing education credits and explore the "Land of Enchantment" state. Look for more information about the 2005 convention in upcoming issues of *Hands On*.

Please contact Heather Stearns at the National Office at 847-905-1643, or *hstearns@amtamassage.org*, with any questions about the continuing education requirements.

## Convention

*continued from page 1*

"For me, the highlight was being able to welcome everyone to the convention in the historic Ryman Auditorium, and to hear [Remen] speak," says Chris Voltarel (CA), convention planning committee co-chair.

### We're Looking For Ideas

AMTA encourages input from members on new ideas for member products, programs and services (PPS). If you have an idea for a new PPS that you'd like AMTA to establish, contact David French at 847-905-1416, or by E-mail at *dfrench@amtamassage.org*.

In her speech, Executive Director Elizabeth Lucas also reported that it has been a year of growth for AMTA. For the first time, the association has more than 50,000 members. Visits to *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist®* national locator service are now more than double what they were this time last year.

The convention closed with the annual dinner dance. The official banner was passed from the Tennessee Chapter to the New Mexico Chapter, which will host the 2005 convention in Albuquerque.

"The convention was well organized, the trade show was interesting and informative, and the classes were *great* this year," says Michael Dukart (OR) of his second convention experience. "It's so much fun to hang out with a thousand other massage people. The energy is tremendous. It was a learning experience for me as a massage therapist."

# Upcoming Deadlines

Mar. 1, 2005 — *May/June 2005 Issue*
May 2, 2005 — *July/August 2005 Issue*

*Hands On* welcomes contributions from all AMTA members. All submissions must include a legible signature and phone number, and may be edited for space and clarification. *Hands On* does not accept advertisements. Address all correspondence to:

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